

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

With this amendment, claims 1, 5, and 7-9 have been amended. Amendments to the as-filed claims are not made for reasons related to patentability, but instead are made solely to expedite prosecution of this case. No new matter has been entered. Claim 4 has been cancelled. Claim 10 was previously withdrawn from consideration. Claims 1-3, 5-9, and 11 are currently pending in the application.

Examiner Interview Summary

Applicants thank the Examiner for granting and participating in the interview on March 11, 2008. During the interview, the Examiner agreed to withdraw the objections to claims 5 and 6 as the specification is clear as to what is meant by “rearward” and “forward” in the claims. Additionally, the Examiner and the Applicants discussed proposed amendments to claim 1 and the prior art references. No agreement was reached on either the proposed claim language or the prior art references.

Claim Objections

During the interview, the Examiner agreed to withdraw the rejections to claims 5 and 6. Claim 8 is objected to because of insufficient antecedent basis in the claim. Claim 8 has been amended to depend from claim 5. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the objections is respectfully requested.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 112

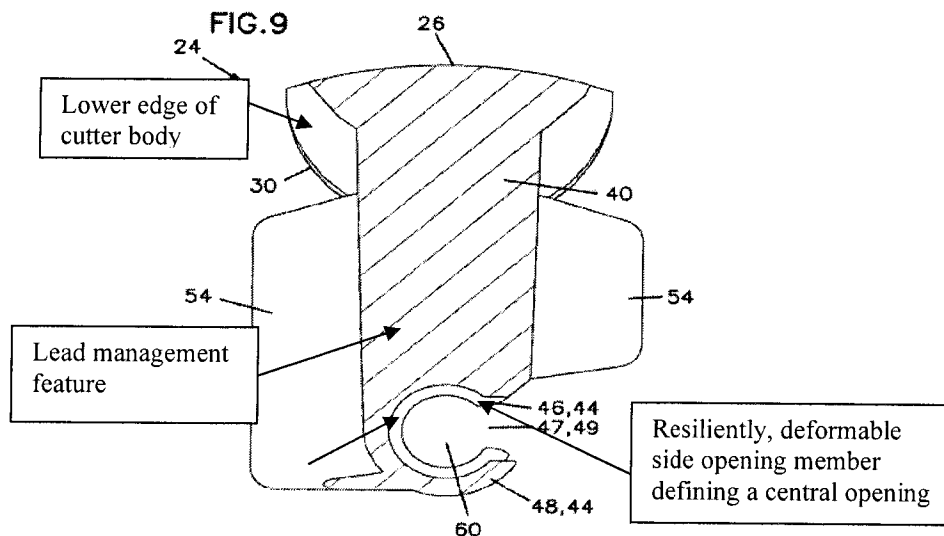
Claim 9 has been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112 as being indefinite. Claim 9 has been amended to positively recite an assembly including a guide catheter, a pacemaker lead, and a cutter. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 112 is respectfully requested.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 102 and 103

Claims 1-4 and 9 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,497,681 (“Brenner”). Claims 1-4, 8, 9 and 11 are rejected under 35 U.S.C.

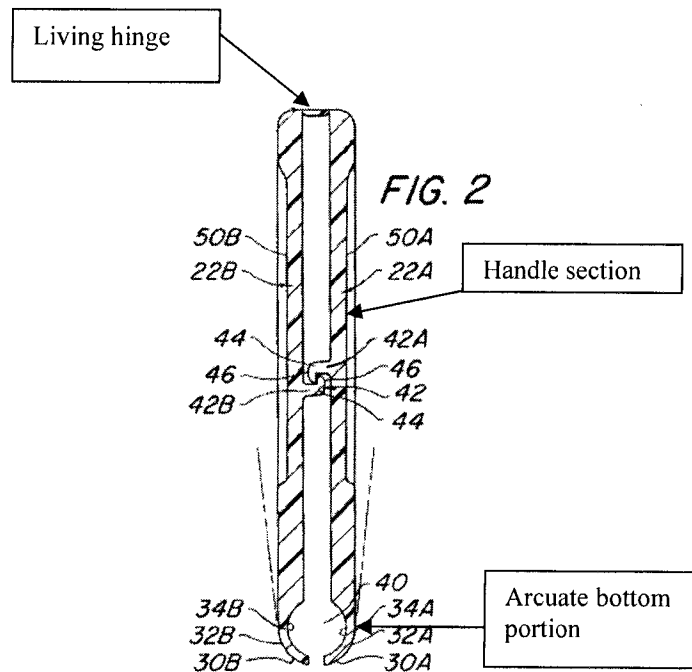
§ 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Publication No. 2003/0181935 (“Gardeski”). Claims 5-7 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Gardeski.

Independent claim 1 is directed to a device for removing a guide catheter from about a linear object positioned within a lumen of the guide catheter having a distal lead management segment including a resiliently deformable side opening member defining a central opening sized to engage the linear object. Additionally, the side opening member is configured to be deformable to allow the lead to be snapped into the central opening and further configured to retain the lead within the central opening. Similarly, independent claim 9 is directed to an assembly including a cutter having a lead management segment including a resiliently deformable side opening member defining a central opening sized for engaging a lead. In both claims 1 and 9, the lead management segment is located adjacent the lower edge of the cutter body. See for example, FIG. 9 reproduced below.

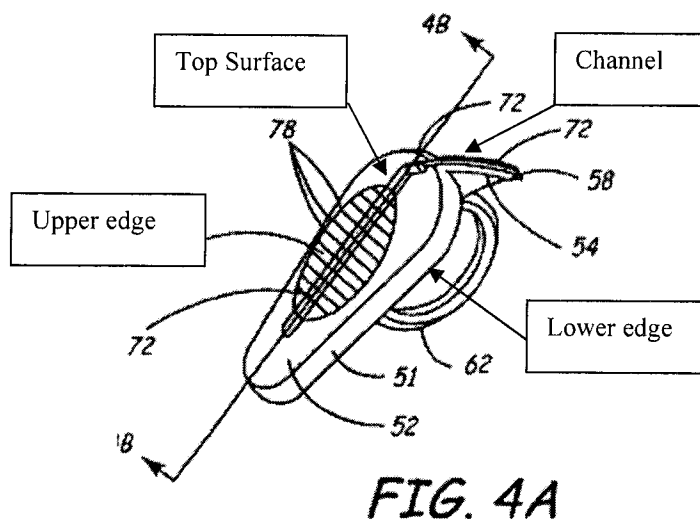


Brenner is directed to a holding device including having two handle sections connected together by a living hinge located at the top of the device such that their respective arcuate bottom portions form a pair of jaws or pinchers capable of gripping a lead body. In contrast to the claimed invention, neither arcuate bottom portion defines a resiliently, deformable side opening member that is configured to deform such that the lead body can be snapped into the central opening from the side. Additionally, neither bottom portion is configured to retain the lead body in the central opening. The arcuate bottom portions are

only capable of engaging a lead body when used together. See for example, FIG. 2 reproduced below.



Gardeski is directed to a slitting tool having including a top surface 52 having a channel 72 that extends along at least a portion of the top surface 52 and further continues along at least a portion of front surface 54 of the nose 53 (paragraph [0047]). A user's thumb is placed over the lead placed in the channel 72 to retain the lead within the channel 72. See for example FIG. 4A, reproduced below.



In contrast to the claimed invention, the channel 72 is not located adjacent the lower edge of the slitting tool 50. Rather, the channel 72 is formed in the top surface of the slitting tool and, therefore, is located adjacent an upper edge of the slitting tool. Additionally, the channel 72 is not resiliently, deformable such that a lead can be snapped into the channel from the side. A user's thumb must be applied to the lead in order to retain the lead within the channel 72. Finally, the channel 72 is not configured to retain the lead in the opening.

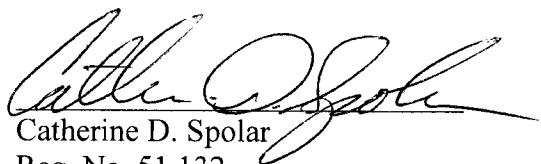
For at least the reasons discussed above, neither Brenner nor Gardeski, either alone or in combination with one another, teach or suggest each and every limitation of independent claims 1 and 9, and as such fail to anticipate or render obvious the claimed invention. Dependent claims 2-3, 5-8, and 11 are also allowable for at least these same reasons as discussed above. Withdrawal of the rejections is respectfully requested.

Conclusion

In summary, all grounds for objections and rejections presented in the Office Action have been overcome. Withdrawal of the rejections and a Notice of Allowance is respectfully requested. The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the number below to facilitate prosecution of this matter.

Respectfully submitted,
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